

Warning: Heroin Substitute Causes Irreversible Damage to Body Tissue

In an abundance of caution due to the high use of heroin, this bulletin is being released to raise awareness of users, healthcare workers and the general public.

"The drug became popular in Russia about 10 years ago as a cheap replacement for heroin. It costs about three times less than heroin, and produces a similar, but much shorter, high.

Krokodil is made from over-the-counter codeine-based headache pills, mixed with gasoline, paint thinner, alcohol or iodine. When a person injects the drug, it destroys tissue, and turns the skin scaly and green, giving it a crocodile-like appearance. The drug can also cause blood poisoning, festering sores and abscesses.

Frank LoVecchio, the Co-Medical Director at the Banner Good Samaritan Poison & Drug Information Center, said Arizona health officials reported seeing two cases in the past week. "As far as I know, these are the first cases in the United States that are reported," he said. "So we're extremely frightened."

The article notes the average life expectancy among krokodil users in Russia is two to three years. Users have compromised immune systems, and are susceptible to HIV, hepatitis C and other blood-borne diseases."

~National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.

Tissue Damaged Caused by Krokodil Use



SOURCES:

First Victims of 'Flesh-Eating' Street Drug Being Treated by Joliet Doctor

<http://joliet.patch.com/groups/police-and-fire/p/first-local-victims-of-flesh>

Flesh-Eating Drug Makes Appearance In Joliet

Homemade heroin substitute "krokodil" originated in Russia and is now in U.S.

<http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/health/Flesh-Eating-Drug-Makes-Appearance-In-Joliet-227124291.html#ixzz2ij9S943D>

Krokodil, The Flesh-Eating Street Drug That Rots Skin From Inside-Out, Expands To Illinois

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/09/krokodil-drug_n_4073417.html

Krokodil use reportedly spreading: What makes dangerous drug so addictive?

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-204_162-57608079/krokodil-use-reportedly-spreading-what-makes-dangerous-drug-so-addictive/

Health officials suspect 2 cases of flesh-eating drug 'krokodil' in Utah

http://fox13now.com/2013/10/16/health-officials-suspect-2-cases-of-flesh-eating-drug-krokodil-in-utah/?hpt=us_bn10

Flesh-Eating Drug 'Krokodil' Hits The U.S.

<http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2013/10/22/flesh-eating-krokodil>

First cases of flesh-eating drug reported in AZ

<http://www.fox19.com/story/23521413/first-cases-of-flesh-eating-drug-reported-in-az>